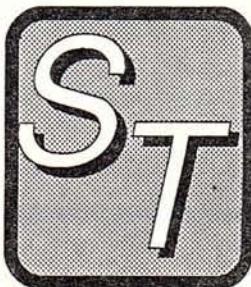


EXCHANGE

Newsletter of the
FRESNO ST USERS GROUP



Vol. 2, Num. 10

October 1987

Another hectic month! I went to the Atari show in Glendale last month and was excited by many of the new things. One of the disappointments was the Atari display. There was no Atari PC or Laser Printer to be seen. In fact Atari's was one of the smaller displays at the show.

On the bright side was the Hybrid Arts booth. They had 16 ST's set up for their Midi Maze contest and also a great display of music software and keyboards.

Also of interest was the Antic display where they were showing the latest Spectrum 512 pictures. Spectrum is a new painting program that allows you to use 512 colors on the screen at the same time. This program should be shipping by the time you read this.

Now that Summer is over there seems to be more and more software coming down the pipe. Electronic Arts has released two very nice programs for the ST. The first, Bard's Tale, is a conversion of one of the all time classic fantasy adventure games. The ST version adds some nice graphic effects but is the same great game as before.

EA's other release is brand new for the ST. GridIron Football is simply the best football game that has ever been on a computer. The graphics are good but could probably have been a little better. The mix of strategy and arcade - like action is really well done. It looks as if Electronic Arts has finally decided to support the ST and lets hope the

ST users will support these new programs as well.

The Mega ST's are finally shipping, at least the Mega 2 without the blitter chip is. Supposedly these first Mega's will have an empty socket for easy installation of the blitter chip when it is finally released. This sort of sounds like the same thing that was said when the 1040's first came out, and I still haven't seen a blitter chip at any of the local outlets.

This month's meeting will be on October 29, at Breuner's Furniture. We will be showing some new software and Mike King will have his disk of this month's best PD software. In fact there is so much good PD software out now that Mike will have two disks for sale this time.

Of major importance this month will be the election of new club officers. It has been a year since the last elections and it is time for some of the other members to get a chance to run for office. If you are interested in helping to run the club for the next year be sure and show up this month. We really need everyone to get involved and help out.

One of the new things we are going to start this month is a help list. This will be a list of the people in the group who are experienced with some of the more popular programs on the ST. If you have an area of expertise you would like to share with the other users just get in touch with me at the meeting and your name and phone number could be here!

The Help List

These are the names and phone numbers of some of our members who have offered to help out other members with the programs they use most.

Richard Maldonado 275-1492

Uses allot of different programs and is willing to help with even minor problems.

DB Master One
Dac Easy Accounting
Base Two
Publishing Partner
SolaPak Utilities
Degas Elite
Neo Chrome

Mickey Obermire 486-3726

Mainly interested in spreadsheet programs.

A Calc
SwiftCalc

Gerald Storvik 229-9827

Specializes in Basic programming.

ST Basic
GFA Basic



ST CLUB OFFICERS

President	Frank Fleisig	435-1184
Vice President	Mark Munoz	225-0389
Treasurer	John Damiano	674-4956
Disk Librarian	Mike Thomas	432-4818
Editor	Greg Pyles	221-1980
Sysop	Matt West	292-6470
Board Member	Danny Shamoon	298-0745
Board Member	Mike Escobar	291-9581

The Fresno ST Users Group is an independent, non-profit club with no connections with Atari, Inc. Membership dues are \$24 a year. Membership includes access to the public domain disk library, a subscription to the monthly newsletter, free use of the club book library, free access to the club BBS, and classes when held. Permission to reprint articles in any non-commercial publication is permitted without written authorization, provided that proper credit is given to the Fresno ST Users Group and the author. Opinions expressed within this newsletter do not necessarily represent the views of the Fresno ST Users Group.

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BUSINESS CARDS	\$3.00

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Submit camera ready copy to:

Fresno ST Newsletter
P.O. Box 3708
Pinedale, Ca. 93650

By the second Saturday of the month



Mikey's Column

Having problems in Trigonometry?? Maybe this new product is for you! Introducing **Trigonometry from Arrakis Advantage** (distributed by Atari). As Atari tries to compete in the educational software market, it is now releasing new educational software products: Algebra I Vol. 1 (Sets and Notation) and Vol. 2 (Number Systems), Algebra II Vol. 1 (Equations and Formulas) and Vol. 2 (Linear Equations), Algebra III (Polynomials), Geometry Vol. 1 (Basic Geometrical Notation) and Vol. 2 (Introduction to Plane and Space Geometry), Statistics (Introduction to Statistics), Trigonometry (Introduction to Trigonometry), Biology Vol. 1 (Respiration) Vol. 2 (Digestion and Nutrition) Vol. 3 (Reproduction and Development) and Vol. 4 (Circulation and the Heart), Chemistry Vol. 1 (The Atom) and Vol. 2 (The Periodic Table), Physics Vol. 1 (Motion) and Vol. 2 (Light). What a list huh??!

Indeed Atari has taken a major step in getting into the educational software market, but how do these educational pieces of software rate? Well, I have purchased the Volume 1 of Trigonometry (and even though Volume 1 is the only current available volume of Trigonometry, I've heard Volumes 2 and 3 are in the

making).

My trig package came as a two disk set and I'm not sure, but I think the rest do as well. The documentation is done fairly well. The reason I say "fairly" is because the documentation in each of the subjects and volumes is all the same booklet. It basically tells you how to operate the program and it doesn't teach you the subject you are studying... rather, it leaves that to the program, which is very self explanatory. The program itself is done rather well. As I have said, it is very self explanatory so children should be able to use it easily. Among the commands within the program are the DEFINE (which defines a concept for you), EXAM (which will give a quiz if you care to), EXAMPLE (which will give you an example of a concept), REVIEW (which will review you on all the concepts you have covered), TEST (which will give you a test over all the concepts you have covered) and many others. The teaching method within the programs is very well done as well. Since I have purchased the Trig package, the program shows me a hypotenuse by animating the line on a triangle to point out the hypotenuse. Every screen (which contains a concept) has some form of animation in it and makes this program very likable. In any

screen, you can type any of the commands and get help, be quizzed, etc. on the subject screen you are currently on (each screen covers a different concept). The program does a very good job of teaching and the program is very complete.

Overall, I liked the Arrakis Advantage Trigonometry and I'm sure the other subjects and volumes are just as informative. I would recommend this educational software to any child or teacher who is in need of a new learning tool. The programs are fairly inexpensive (\$14 mail order) so cost is not a problem. If you are planning to purchase one of the programs I mentioned, you might want to contact me through the BBS (438-5802) and ask me which volume you should buy because the grade levels of each change (and I have a chart which shows the corresponding programs to grade levels). If you cannot ask me, ask the salesperson from where you buy it and he'll/she'll tell you which volume you need.

Mike Thomas



BBS INFO

If you have not changed your Dial Directory, make sure you do before you call Fresno ST Users Group BBS again! The number has been changed as a result of the relocation of the BBS and is now 438-5802! The old number has been disconnected as of the first of this month.

Well, all of you who took a vacation from modeming as a result of the Amiga preachers and Van Heusen jokes, you may all come back now. The Amiga people have all been given limited access and I lost my Van Heusen shirt so there's no need for ironing anymore. We're waiting for your calls and questions, so give us a call AT THE NEW NUMBER. We're waiting for any questions you might have.

New on the BBS is the addition of a new SIG (Special Interest Group). SIG #4 now holds, in addition to all the Atari ST Basic programs, all the latest programs people have uploaded and we have put for up for downloading. The new SIG, called "New Downloads" (appropriately), has been created by Matt at the request of users who hate going through every SIG (all 16 of them!!) and looking for the latest programs to download. A listing of all the latest downloads can be obtained by hitting the "L" command at the SIG #4 download menu.

Among the new downloads are new pictures made by the Spectrum 512 paint program. 512 colors on-screen AT ONCE!! All in SIG #4.... C-ya there!!!

Mike Thomas

ATARI NEWS AND RUMORS

Compiled for B.A.S.I.C. and Dateline

by Larry Richards

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NEW ATARI HARDWARE NOW SHIPPING!

After what seemed like an eternity of pushed-back deadlines, last minute glitches, and excruciatingly slow boats from the far east, the long-awaited new Atari hardware is finally starting to appear on the dealers' shelves. Leading the "parade" is the SX212 1200 baud modem, featuring both a standard RS232 serial connector (for use with the ST) and an 8-bit style SIO daisychain connector for use with the Atari 8-bit computers with no interface. The SX212 retails for \$99.95 and is said to be completely Hayes-compatible.

The final new hardware item now shipping from Atari is the "crown jewel" in the product line, the Mega. The first production units were finally shipped out recently and the blitter WAS included. Atari is now off on a "Mega rollout tour" as they seek to introduce the new machines to "professional" dealers throughout the country. Atari has also lined up a number of "professional" software publishers, such as WordPerfect, which will be debuting the ST version of WordPerfect on the tour, to accompany them. Yes, "professional" seems to be the operative word here, as the Mega will have "professional" dealers, "professional" software, and a "professional" price! The retail price for a Mega 2 is \$1699 for a

mono system and \$1899 for color. The Mega 4 goes for \$2399 mono and \$2599 color. Add this to stringent Mega dealer qualifications and a STRICT no mail order policy, and it becomes evident that discounts on these prices will be very hard to come by, at least for now. This may account for the recent surge in sales of the 520ST and 1040ST, as people who were patiently waiting for the Megas to arrive got wind of the new prices and decided that "Power without the Price" was better than "Power WITH the Price". In any case, other "professional" features of the Mega include a detachable keyboard with much improved feel, an internal expansion socket, a 68000 bus extender socket (for external expansion), a battery-backed internal clock, new ROMs, an internal DMA port and power supply tap, and, of course, the long-awaited blitter chip.

OTHER ATARI HARDWARE STILL AMONG THE MISSING

All is not peaches and cream with Atari's promised hardware, however. A number of new products have still not made their appearance and Atari is not being very helpful in providing information about them. First and foremost is the Atari Laser Printer, which was supposed to be out BEFORE the Megas. Atari claims that the printer is working fine, but the INTERFACE that allows the printer to pass along the ST DMA bus is still having problems. They say it should be ready to ship "any day now". Of course, by the time it is ready a \$1500 laser printer with no

ATARI NEWS ...

(continued from previous page)

on-board RAM and limited to use with one brand of computer might not seem to be as much of a bargain as it seemed back in January.

Cold on the heels of the Laser Printer is the Atari PC. Still missing after months of on-again, off-again announcements from Atari, the Atari PC, like the Laser Printer, might not be much of a bargain by the time it makes its appearance. After almost being killed by a doubting Sam Tramiel, the PC is apparently on again, but Atari does not seem to be very enthusiastic about it. A \$700 PC clone with a monochrome monitor and no slots doesn't seem like such a great deal when a local electronics store here in Brooklyn is selling Blue Chip PC clones for \$438 complete with mono monitor and six slots.

NON-ATARI HARDWARE AND SOFTWARE

Magic Sac users now have hard disk support and compatibility with more than 90% of present Macintosh software thanks to version 4.52 of the Magic Sac boot software, now shipping from Data Pacific. Present Sac owners can get the new software, along with a completely re-written manual, by sending their original Atari boot disk, along with \$20, to Data Pacific. Ver. 4.52 is also now shipping with all new Magic Sac cartridges. The long-awaited Translator ONE, which will allow STs using the Magic Sac to read original Mac disks, was supposed to begin shipping on October 1, however a shipment of

mislabeled chips from "Raving Idiot Computer Chips" began trashing Translator mother boards being assembled and played havoc with Data Pacific's shipping schedule. David Small is picking up the pieces (and preparing his lawsuit), so expect delivery to be delayed a couple of weeks or so.

Electronic Arts has finally admitted that the ST market does exist and has just released a number of their programs, including Music Construction Set (not Deluxe), The Bard's Tale, and the long-promised Marble Madness, to try to make a few bucks off of it. I wonder if Trip included any "buy an Amiga" messages with the new programs?

ICD Inc., makers of the P:R:Connection, the MIO board, the US Doubler and SpartDOS, among others for the Atari 8-bit line, has just introduced their first ST product. The ICD SCSI Host Adaptor retails for \$134.95 and allows use of standard SCSI controllers and hard disks with the ST. There are a number of other products on the market that do the same thing (from Berkeley Micro Systems and Supra) for about the same price, but the ICD is the only one that has a second DMA port to allow another DMA device to share the DMA bus. This means that an Atari, Supra, or Astra hard drive could be used at the same time as an ICD setup.

ICD also announced that they will be selling a complete hard disk assembly using their host adaptor. It will be housed in a low-profile case that can also serve as a monitor stand, and it

will contain either one or two hard drive mechanisms of 20, 30, 40 or more megs, depending on the configuration ordered, and it, like the host adaptor, will have a second DMA connector to continue the DMA bus. It will also have a SCSI port to allow up to 7 additional SCSI devices to be controlled by the host adaptor. This will allow flexible and relatively inexpensive expansion of hard disk storage (great for BBSs!). Final prices were not announced, although ICD said that they expect a single 20 meg system to be comparable in price to the Atari and Supra 20 meg units.

Speaking of hard disk utilities, Beckemeyer Development has released a package called the Beckemeyer Hard Disk Tool Kit which features an excellent hard disk backup program. Finally, Future Systems Inc., current makers of the Indus GT disk drives for the 8-bit computers, has just released the GTS-100, a double-sided 3.5" floppy drive for the ST.

LATE BREAKING FLASH!

Word from Neil Harris on GEnie is that the IBM hardware emulator box, which had been "on the back burner" while Atari fiddled with the PC, is now apparently back under full development at Atari. My guess is that Atari discovered that they could sell the Megas to the business market much more effectively if they featured MS-DOS compatibility (in fast hardware rather than slow software), much like the Mac SE/II and the Amiga 2000. Of course, no price or release date was mentioned.

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LIBRARY NOTES

The group has created a book library for the use of our members. These books will be available to be checked out at the meetings or they can be picked up at the Software Review (that's where I work). You can only keep the books for a week at a time in order to give everyone a chance to see them. There is no charge for the use of the books so be sure to check it out at the next meeting.

Mike King is the new Disk Librarian and will make arrangements to have the old disks at the meetings for copying. If you have any questions about the back copies of the Disk of the Month call Mike at 432-4818.

NEXT MEETING

Thursday, October 29

7:00 P.M.

Breuners Furniture
corner of
Cedar and Shaw